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26 October 1963

Honorable Claiborne Pell
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Pell:

I appreciate your thoughtfulness in bringing to my attention your remarks on the Floor of the Senate on the subject of "Separation of Intelligence and Operational Functions of the CIA."

Understandably this is a subject that has concerned me during my two years as Director of Central Intelligence and previously as a member of the National Security Council when I was Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. It is to be noted that we at one time operated under such a separation and it was the considered judgment of those who were responsible for directing intelligence community policies that the interests of the United States would be better served by a consolidation of activities. It is also of interest to me that the British have traditionally operated under a plan akin to "separation" but in my most recent talks with the senior people in the British intelligence community, they seemed to have concluded that a plan of consolidation would better serve their purpose.

For my personal experience, I found that in the earlier days of CIA there existed something of an "in-house" separation. Under this the analysts often did not have the benefit of all available intelligence and the operators, on the other hand, did not always have the benefit of the analysts' judgment. It has been my policy to attempt to correct this deficiency, which I feel has been a real one, by bringing the responsible directors of the various activities of the CIA together on a daily basis to insure that the interface between departments, which I consider essential, is maintained to the maximum extent possible.

Although there is no black or white in the organization of any department of the Government, I believe the results gained from the policy I have endeavored to institute have been rewarding and beneficial to our country's interests and hence I suggest their continuance.

Sincerely,

John A. McCone

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